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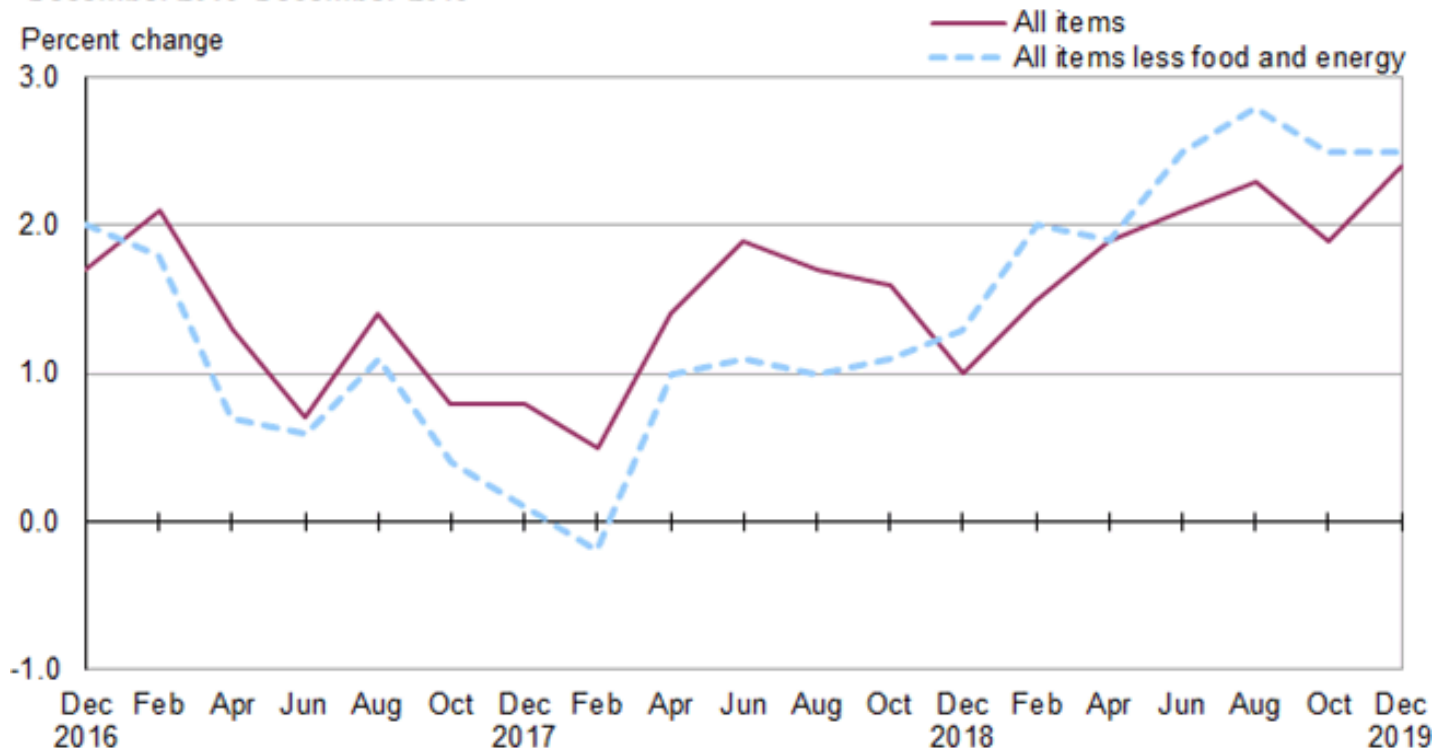
Consumer Price Index, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington – December 2019

Area prices down 0.3 percent since October; up 2.4 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington edged down 0.3 percent from October to December, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent two-month decline reflected a 0.3-percent decreased in the all items less food and energy index and a 1.2-percent decline in the energy index, while the food index rose since October, up 0.1 percent. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 2.4 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A.](#)) The over-the-year rise was led by an increase in the all items less food and energy index (2.5 percent). The food index and energy index also advanced since December 2018, up 1.8 and 2.1 percent, respectively. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, December 2016–December 2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

The food index inched up 0.1 percent over the last two months. Prices for food away from home increased since October, up 0.6 percent, while those for food at home declined 0.3 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for citrus fruits; bacon, breakfast sausage, and related products; and fresh fish and seafood; while prices were higher for eggs and pork chops.

Over the year, the food index increased 1.8 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 3.1 percent, and those for food at home were up 0.9 percent.

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 1.2 percent since October. The two-month decline was led by a 5.4-percent decrease in utility (piped) gas service prices. Prices were also lower for gasoline, down 0.7 percent, while those for electricity increased, up 0.8 percent.

Over the year, the energy index advanced 2.1 percent, due to higher gasoline prices, up 4.5 percent. Prices were also higher for electricity, up 2.2 percent. Utility (piped) gas service prices declined since December 2018, down 1.2 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged down 0.3 percent from October to December. Prices were lower for apparel (-9.0 percent) and shelter (-0.6 percent) while prices were higher for recreation (3.3 percent) and education and communication (0.7 percent).

Since December 2018, the index for all items less food and energy increased 2.5 percent. Prices were higher for a number of items including shelter (2.6 percent), medical care (3.6 percent), and recreation (4.5 percent), among others.

Table A. Philadelphia CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month	2-month	12-month
February	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	0.3	0.7	2.1	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.5
April	0.5	0.0	0.9	0.6	0.0	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.9
June	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	-0.3	0.7	0.2	1.9	0.5	2.1
August	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2	0.4	0.5	1.4	0.3	1.7	0.5	2.3
October	-0.3	-0.5	0.6	1.3	0.0	0.8	0.0	1.6	-0.4	1.9
December	-0.6	-0.2	-0.1	1.7	-0.1	0.8	-0.7	1.0	-0.3	2.4

The Consumer Price Index for February 2020 is scheduled to be released Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 8:30 am (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington is published bi-monthly. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total population.

The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, Core Based Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Dec. 2018	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019
All items.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	257.966		257.194	2.4	-0.3	
All items (1967 = 100)	<input type="checkbox"/>	745.248		743.021			
Food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	239.360		239.228	1.7	-0.1	
Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	239.717		239.966	1.8	0.1	
Food at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	241.510	243.276	240.901	0.9	-0.3	-1.0
Cereals and bakery products	<input type="checkbox"/>	302.314		306.200	0.5	1.3	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	269.248		266.525	1.2	-1.0	
Dairy and related products	<input type="checkbox"/>	208.657		207.769	5.1	-0.4	
Fruits and vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	276.035		270.041	-2.7	-2.2	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	159.807		160.379	1.6	0.4	
Other food at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	216.665		218.616	1.6	0.9	
Food away from home.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	231.582		232.978	3.1	0.6	
Alcoholic beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	231.661		226.047	-0.3	-2.4	
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	269.076		267.269	2.3	-0.7	
Shelter	<input type="checkbox"/>	336.156	335.282	334.247	2.6	-0.6	-0.3
Rent of primary residence	<input type="checkbox"/>	312.856	314.103	314.234	2.7	0.4	0.0
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	344.573	345.970	345.494	2.9	0.3	-0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	344.573	345.970	345.494	2.9	0.3	-0.1
Fuels and utilities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	212.996		210.069	1.3	-1.4	
Household energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	174.313	174.307	171.353	0.4	-1.7	-1.7
Energy services.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	183.773	184.046	180.700	0.9	-1.7	-1.8
Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/>	178.283	178.225	179.659	2.2	0.8	0.8
Utility (piped) gas service	<input type="checkbox"/>	180.596	181.360	170.917	-1.2	-5.4	-5.8
Household furnishings and operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	115.167		114.433	0.5	-0.6	
Apparel	<input type="checkbox"/>	109.944		100.005	-1.1	-9.0	
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	211.840		211.268	2.5	-0.3	
Private transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	210.394		210.567	2.1	0.1	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	99.214		98.294	0.2	-0.9	
New vehicles(1).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	179.138		177.892	0.0	-0.7	
Used cars and trucks(1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	255.555		254.010	0.2	-0.6	
Motor fuel	<input type="checkbox"/>	240.552	243.930	239.041	4.3	-0.6	-2.0
Gasoline (all types).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	237.105	240.417	235.519	4.5	-0.7	-2.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	233.767	237.157	232.345	4.7	-0.6	-2.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	243.922	246.558	243.310	4.5	-0.3	-1.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	241.669	244.195	238.756	2.5	-1.2	-2.2
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	712.845		728.581	0.6	2.2	
Medical care	<input type="checkbox"/>	546.358		550.507	3.6	0.8	
Recreation(3).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	122.272		126.350	4.5	3.3	
Education and communication(3).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	132.661		133.598	2.3	0.7	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,052.538		1,052.538	1.6	0.0	
Other goods and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	554.639		556.200	2.9	0.3	
Commodity and service group							

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Dec. 2018	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019
Commodities	<input type="checkbox"/>	181.587		179.655	1.8	-1.1	
Commodities less food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	149.551		147.132	1.8	-1.6	
Nondurables less food and beverages...	<input type="checkbox"/>	192.922		188.945	2.4	-2.1	
Durables	<input type="checkbox"/>	102.660		101.717	0.9	-0.9	
Services.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	335.207		335.394	2.7	0.1	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	232.130		231.782	2.3	-0.1	
All items less medical care	<input type="checkbox"/>	245.788		244.794	2.3	-0.4	
Commodities less food	<input type="checkbox"/>	152.547		150.039	1.8	-1.6	
Nondurables	<input type="checkbox"/>	217.570		215.147	2.1	-1.1	
Nondurables less food.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	195.249		191.187	2.3	-2.1	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	341.577		344.066	2.8	0.7	
Services less medical care services.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	319.348		319.347	2.5	0.0	
Energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	198.140	199.403	195.740	2.1	-1.2	-1.8
All items less energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	266.560		265.978	2.4	-0.2	
All items less food and energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	273.766		273.055	2.5	-0.3	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base
- (2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.
- (3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.